

24.

ADMONITIONS
FOR THE
HOLY WEEK,

Appropriated to the Present Time.

CONTAINING

DEVOUT and CHRISTIAN EXERCISES
under Three Heads;

MEDITATIONS, RESOLVES, and PRAYER,
Suited to each PARTICULAR DAY:

AND

Tending to illustrate the Service of the CHURCH for
those DAYS; as also to the peculiar Observance of
GOOD-FRIDAY, and a due Preparation for receiving
the SACRAMENT on the succeeding EASTER-
SUNDAY.

L O N D O N:

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ADDITIONS

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TO HIS
G R A C E

T H E

Archbishop of CANTERBURY.

MY LORD,

AN author whose former writings your Grace has been pleased to receive favourably, presumes to address this short but needful treatise to your protection: and as he writes for use, not ostentation, he hopes your Grace will pardon the omission of his name.

That your Grace may long continue in that dignity to which your virtues alone have raised you, is his most earnest prayer; not for the sake of your Grace alone, but of the
Chri-

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Christian church. In this all good
men join with him, who is,

MY LORD,

YOUR GRACE'S

most obedient servant.

* * * * *

ADMO-

ADMONITIONS

FOR THE

HOLY WEEK.

I. PREPARATION.

K NOW thy state O man ! The sure and the everlasting misery that is doomed thee, if thou persist offending ; the certain and eternal happiness, which thou mayest purchase by repentance and amendment.

There is no middle course ; nor art thou sure there is one moment but the present, for the important choice. Seize it : embrace it : throw thyself at thy Creator's feet : implore thy great Redeemer's intercession. Thy Saviour never will refuse to plead ; or thy God to pardon.

Remember now how long thou hast delayed, how often thou hast postponed

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this great yet easy task : who knoweth but the hand of death, certain to strike thee one day, now prepares, now draws back the inevitable dart, which once discharged, seals thy eternal sentence.

Who placed thee on this globe ; fertile in every natural blessing ? By whom wert thou thus made ? Who formed the earth, thy spacious habitation ? Who spread around the curtain of the skies ; and sent the giant sun to run his course ? the placid moon inviting contemplation ; and light-ed up those admantine fires which glow innumerable round her.

Thy reason tells thee a superior power, and the first motion of thy heart is praise.

He from the original of time, has taught thee, how thou shouldst pay that tribute ; by Moses first : and after by his son. Of nations left in darkness ; and of those, who lived in times of a less perfect revelation, he has demanded nothing more than the means afforded them, gave light to execute. But thee O man, to whom he has allotted this period of being, and this seat of pure religion ; thee he has favoured with all opportunities to know thy duty : and the omission is the highest crime.

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He hath fixed thy happy lot where perfect knowledge reigns : yet what does he require of thee ! what even of thee, whom he has raised in most enlightened times, and seated in the land of true religion ? No horrid rites, or human sacrifices, no pains or misery. No Molock calls thy children through the fire ! no papal rigour draws thee to a convent. Nor is it needed thou shouldst forfeit any thing that is truly valuable here to purchase an eternity of glory.

“ His yoke is easy and his burthen light : ”

But what his laws demand must be performed. Observe, obey them, call them to remembrance ; nor in this long oblivion and apostacy, neglect to hear his voice, whom now perhaps, the God of Israel inspireth.

The offering he demands, is the true sacrifice of thine offences. This day, this hour, this moment is the time. The weeks of solemn preparation have passed over ; I fear, too lightly : and the immediate time now presses. The instant must be seized, or all is lost.

The prophet's trumpet has been blown in vain ! the fast is sanctified ; but who abstains. No heart is rent for its offences : no not the garment. Even the pretence

and superficial sign of penitence is not offered here.

Awake impenitent! arise, attend O unregarding man! before the archangel trumpet, louder than the prophet's, the voice of heaven shall call thee: not to repentance; but to punishment.

Who is there, born in Christian Governments, that does not know the intent and purpose of these weeks of pious observation? inculcated in the earliest time, and till this late and most abandoned period, observed with reverence: a season of humiliation and repentance; ordained for recollection of past errors, and for their atonement by sincere repentance: a period sacred to devotion.

Examine then thy soul; and search it deeply. Thy actions and thy thoughts will be examined, where no false colours can deceive: where nothing can be hidden. Prepare for that dread hour by thine own strict enquiry: anticipate the examination of thy Saviour; and by rejecting all that is amiss, take off the fear and terror of that final judgment: so shalt thou meet thy Saviour in the clouds, as thy redeemer, not thy offended judge: and glow with transport when the guilty tremble.

This

This is thy hope ; and this is the allotted period for that preparation. The practice is most easy, and the neglect is desperation. This duly, and as it becomes thy place, performed, thy heart shall feel true peace ; thine eyes look forward to eternity with rapture ; and thine affections raised above the earth ; thou shalt wake as with thy Saviour from the tomb, and shew by thine example and thy happiness, the dignity of virtue, and comforts of religion.

Let thine examination be SINCERE, for it is performed in his presence, who knows thine inmost thoughts. Let thy sorrow be unfeigned, for he cannot be deceived to whom it is addressed. Assist these pious undertakings, by fasting and by prayer ; and shew the strength and fullness of the purpose by charity to the distressed ; and by a due humiliation,

These are the steps by which thou mayest ascend to heaven : these the atonement for thy past offences ; and the more low this holy exercise shall place thee, the higher will it raise thy state of glory.

Shall pride prevent thee ? vain and wretched creature ! look to thy Saviour's history ; and learn better ! he left the throne of heaven for thee : God descended
for

for thy sake to wear the form of man ;
to suffer all the miseries of thy nature ; all
the indignities thy kind could lay upon
him, even to a shameful death. And mark
the consequence ! for this humiliation God
exalted him above all dignity ; all glory :
placed him at his right hand : and decreed
that at his name for ever, all knees should
bow, in earth, in heaven, and in the
lowest hell ; omnipotent and universal king.

✓ Here, see the glory of humility : see
its reward ; and following thy great master's
steps, receive his promised recompence.
A life eternal in the heavens.

SUNDAY.

The first day of the Holy Week.

I. MEDITATIONS.

IF we have passed unheedingly the ap-
pointed weeks of pious exercise, let us
begin repentance with our sorrow, our
shame and misery, for that neglect : and
snatching the present moment from the
account of our offences, begin the duty of
this sacred day ; the appointed meekness
and humiliation ; by a due sense and sor-
row for that fault.

Who

Who shall be arrogant when he was humble? the vessel formed of earth, shall it claim dignity, when the great hand that made it was all lowliness? Absurd, preposterous thought!

Can we want cause who feel our imperfections? we cannot want example, when, behold in the mind's eye, and in our needful remembrance, the Son of God descending from the height of heaven, and patiently enduring misery, and the most painful death! Shall we poor reptiles, think it degrades our dignity to own ourselves most wretched sinners; when he submitted thus who had no sin! Shall we think it too much, to do for ourselves what he did for us? Alas! we cannot do or suffer in the least proportion: it is not expected of us: but what we can do, and what is expected, let us perform freely, adding some value to the mean offering by the desiring heart with which we make the sacrifice.

Pride is the fatal folly of our nature: it is the sad error that sticks closest to us: and is the greatest enemy to this part of religion. Let us then combat with our best endeavours this false and foolish vanity. No thought can be more idle than that which places a distinction between

one human creature and another! —
 What are the rich, and what the poor?
 What are the noble, what the mean, what
 are the fortunate, and what the misera-
 ble? Alas! Are they not all one clay?
 Have they not equally one rank in the
 great scale of being? God has created all
 alike: the accidents of fortune, or per-
 haps the crimes of ancestors alone, have
 placed the highest above the meanest
 of the species: and the hand of death
 shall again make them equal.

We who enjoy the blessings of this life,
 let us remember this: consider the poor
 as our brethren, and humble our rising
 pride, by the remembrance, that to-mor-
 row we may all be equal.

Nay, there is much more: the grave
 but leads to immortality; and the mo-
 ment that our dust is equal, the beggar's
 soul may rise superior: for he may have
 been virtuous while we were criminal.

This let pride remember: this let him
 think upon who shuts his eyes against the
 afflictions of the necessitous and oppressed,
 and fancies himself removed from the same
 hope of being. How must he tremble
 when he recollects this Lazarus he drives
 to-day from his arrogant thoughts, may
 but to-morrow see him change condition.

That

That he may beg, where he refused to give; and not a drop of water be allowed him, because he had not in his time of affluence a drop of human blood; a grain of charity.

Down pride!—give way to recollection. Man can never harbour thee but when he banishes his reason.

Not only we are equal, because all created in the same form, all placed in the same rank of being; but because we were all undone together; the sovereign and beggar alike forfeited to all good hope by the transgression of their common parent; and how redeemed from this perdition!—Is there in the salvation of our Lord one rank of happiness appointed for the king, another the subject?—No.—All fallen alike, all are redeemed together. The great things in our nature, our being, and our hope of a blessed eternity we enjoy in common. The distinctions of high and low regard only the lesser and more frivolous objects; and they are, therefore vain distinctions.

Does not the king bow his knee as low to God as the most abject of his subjects? either he does, or he knows nothing of his nature: ourselves have made these differences of rank; and they regard only

ourselves. Man is man with his Creator, no matter whether he be cloathed in rags or purple ; whether his hand be stretched out for an alms, or grasp a regal scepter. The prayer suits equally the lord and servant, the giver and receiver ; and in that greatest office of their nature, the address to their Creator, they are equal. It is the man kneels : he left the king when he approached his God.

Must not this teach humility. If the great kneel with sense of their distinction, their prayer is mockery. If they assume their pride the moment they are risen, have they not dissembled in their humiliation. Let them examine strictly, and fearfully into this solemn article : if pride have thus misled them, whom have they mocked but God ? and whom have they attempted to deceive but him to whom in the same breath they have acknowledged "all hearts are open, all desires known ?"

We seek, and we depend upon the benefits obtained by our Redeemer's death : and we are proud to call ourselves Christians. Vain and thoughtless are we if we claim this privilege, and think not of the appointed and most fixed conditions. If we would enjoy the advantages of his
passion,

passion, we must imitate his conduct. We must adopt, as far as our weak natures can, his sentiments: and these are the reverse of pride. - He who had all the dignity of heaven humbled himself to earth: he who could command legions of angels to attend him, washed his disciples feet: he whose voice had, if he pleased, been thunder, was mute before his judges and accusers. He whom the heavens would at his command have bowed down to receive, suffered death with common criminals.

Pride is revengeful; but the Saviour of the world was all submission: pride raises us above the wretched; but he reduced himself even to a level with the guilty: pride is unforgiving; but he acquitted all. O glorious lesson! O supreme example! man who exalts himself denies and disavows thee.

2. RESOLUTIONS.

Such was my Saviour, and I will follow his most blessed steps: low as I am, I will attempt his likeness: what I adore I will at a distance imitate: like him, be meek, be lowly, and be patient. I will disclaim all pride: humility shall be my glory.

I will imitate him even to death, if the Supream will so disposes of me that I may share with him his glorious resurrection : heir of a blessed immortality.

Am I afflicted? I will bear it patiently. Are others in distress, I will relieve them. I have banished pride that made the whole distinction : they are my brothers ; children of the same father, and coheirs of the same redemption !

Whatever wounds me I will be resigned : my pattern is my Saviour and my God : and resignation is true constancy of mind. I will suffer even as he suffered : no breath of murmuring shall escape my lips : I know that he is good who suffers me to be afflicted ; and imitating my Saviour in his resignation, I shall, after the short trial is ended, share his reward.

Whether or not myself am miserable, I will compassionate the distress of others. This my religion teaches ; and I will truly learn it. I need not look about for objects : mankind is born to sorrow. Which ever way I turn my eyes I see them ; and as my nearest kindred I will cherish them. If need required, myself would tend them in the bed of sickness ; and dress their wounds without reluctance. Did not my Saviour do much more than this for me? he
suf-

suffered all the pains, I need but pity, and relieve. Has he not given the good Samaritan for my example? has not his divine breath uttered, Go, AND DO THOU LIKEWISE.

But here it is not needed. No more can be performed for these most wretched of my fellow-creatures than to contribute out of my superfluity to those establishments where they are better served. Shall I refuse? no, let me do it freely. Let me from my abundance spare to every public charity. Nay, let me make a double virtue of the gift: let it be a sacrifice of sin; at least of folly; that I bestow. I will devote to each of these, the price of one day's idle amusement, or of one evening's vanity. The price I should have paid for some frivolous pleasure, the sum I might have lost at play, shall go to relieve the poor, and comfort the distressed. Their prayers shall follow me, and God will accept, as I bequeath the gift, the sacrifice of sin, and offering of commiseration.

Shall I who see the duty of humility devote at this holy time the night to vanity and idle dissipation? render myself unable as well as unfit for the sacred office of the succeeding day, by riot; and as I must be afraid and ashamed to appear before my
Saviour

Saviour and my God, be also by my voluntary disorder, incapable of devotion!—far be that thought from me. No,—blessed be my sovereign, who has now for some years, and will, I hope, for ever, forbid the worst of these: and for ever be remembered, with due reverence, that holy prelate's name*, who has prevented the accustomed profanation of this holy week; and suffered no such avocations.—The poor will bless me for the price I have been used to pay for vanity and pain: and it will be a sacrifice of pride; a tribute to humanity.

To this general benefaction I will to-day add gifts to the poor, and comforts to the wretched. In my behaviour to inferiors, they shall see I place them as may equals; and to those above me, whether their deeds be good or bad, I will yield submission.

Thus will I imitate so far as my weak nature can, the holy pattern that is set before me. He hath exceeded all that man can execute; but my desires shall follow him! I will be humble in my thoughts; patient in my affections whatsoever they be; resigned to heaven; and to my power benevolent among my fellow-creatures.

* The bishop of London.

3. P R A Y E R.

Strengthen in me, I beseech thee, O Lord, these resolutions! assist me with thy grace to combat pride; and grant that I may keep before my sight for ever the example of my Lord and Saviour: that duly feeling the weakness of my own condition, I may remember always my hope is in thy thy holy spirit, and my redemption by his sacred blood. Grant I beseech thee, that I may this day, and the ensuing week, commemorate with due sense and gratitude, that holy sacrifice; and that my whole life, after being suited to this dependence, I may conform myself to his great example: and by thy mercy be partaker of his glorious resurrection. Amen.

M O N D A Y.

The second day of the Holy Week.

I. M E D I T A T I O N S.

WE have viewed ourselves as men, creatures endowed with reason, and thence taught the necessity of religion; convinced there is a God by our own structure, and by the rest of his creation; and
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shewn by this plain proof of his power and goodness, that we owe him praise.

This was the source of our first days meditation in the holy week : awaking to to the second, full of that reverence, that gratitude and awe, let us so far as we are yet informed, so far as our frail and weak reason will admit, contemplate our condition, first, as the sons of Adam ; and then as the redeemed of Jesus Christ.

The crime of our first parent, held in its complicated nature, weakness, ingratitude, and disobedience. He was weak in suffering his reason given him, for a guide and guardian principle, to be confounded and perverted against the light of absolute knowledge, by the deceit of an accursed spirit : ungrateful in forgetting the benefits conferred upon him by his Creator, who formed him from the dust of the earth, and breathing into his new form a living soul, placed him but little lower than the angels : and disobedient to express command.

His fate was ours : for being his descendants ; it could not be, but that we must inherit his condition. His frailties he bequeathed to us ; and with his faults we stood the heirs also of his condemnation.

Wretched

Wretched condition ! and but for the
 supream beneficence of our Redeemer,
 lost and most hopeless ! He had degraded
 and debased our nature, from whom we
 all descended : Offenders like himself,
 'twas not in us to atone the crime, under
 whose weight we sunk. Here then, when
 not ourselves, nor all our race could save
 us descended our Redeemer from the clouds.

In this state our great Saviour, the new
 Adam, for so the Apostle most distinctly
 names the blessed Jesus, came from the hea-
 vens to redeem us : He came not as himself
 or in his own great form, but as if one of
 us : He came not to oppose the sentence un-
 der which we groaned ; but to endure it for
 us : at once to pay the forfeit of the ear-
 liest Adam's sin, by offering to the offend-
 ed king of heaven himself for us ; superior
 and more valuable than a thousand times
 our race ; a willing sacrifice. An unoffend-
 ing innocent, resigned to the painful task, and
 humble, not with God alone, but with his
 judges, his betrayers, and his executioners.

Thus died the Saviour of the world ;
 and thus alone the race of man could be
 redeemed : but this great work performed,
 how high, how glorious the scene ! His
 sufferings all were digniy, and his death
 triumphant victory. The conquest was
 made, there where it was most needful,

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and most just to conquer : over the dreaded powers of death and hell. He rose the first-fruits of the great atchievement ; and we are all to follow : and from the cross, where men supposed him lost, he looked down on principalities and powers ; whom he had divested of their former conquest, triumphant in the restoration of mankind.

'Tis thus the prophet long before described him, red from the conflict, and returning glorious ; mighty to save ; his own arm singly, author of the deliverance. He could alone, have stoped the course of ruin ; alone have driven the infernal powers before him ; alone have reconciled the offended, God to his devoted creatures !

And with what reverence, awe, and terror should man remember this his great deliverance ? With what grief reflect upon the pains his dying Saviour bore for his redemption ? and, with what joy on that accomplished miracle ?

We now are called upon to that remembrance : wretched abandoned creatures, delivered from one death in vain, we plunge ourselves headlong into another : forgetful of these benefits we yield ourselves again up to a beaten enemy, and by

a voluntary act, devote ourselves again to to their correction. For us the Saviour of the world descended from the skies in vain ! in vain he suffered ! and in vain he triumphed ; the church enacts ; and the laws command observance of this appointed time for the commemoration of that great event ; yet who regards it ?

Let us awake to-day, though we have slept the rest of our unheeding lives : let us remember the deliverance, and praise the great deliverer. In vain the priests and ministers of God prostrate themselves, imploring mercy ! in vain they weep before the sacred altar ! in vain they pray the long offended hand of heaven to spare us, nor to give us to reproach ! The clouds burst over us ; and if we would avoid the thunder, 'tis our own penitent and contrite hearts must save us.

To the rebellious Israelites, the prophet could recount deliverance from bondage, conquest of mighty enemies, and signs and wonders in the land of Ham ! To call them to repentance he recounts the sea divided to give them a passage, and returning to overwhelm their enemies ; the wonders by the hand of Moses ; and their establishment against all earthly power. But these are little to our calls to gratitude, to a sense of the divine favour, and to penitence.

Was Pharaoh equal to the infernal spirit, enemy to the human race? Or what were all the wonders of the wilderness compared to a divine and crucified Redeemer?

Let us retain at all times a just sense of it: but most at this appropriated season, devoted to its awful memory. We say the Jews were stubborn! What are we? they sinned against great mercies: we refuse the memory of greater.

To-day and yesterday's reflection have perhaps been useful: let us pursue the course. It is the hand of God, (ready to lead us always, if we will obey) that has begun the work of our conversion: let us pursue the sacred path: let us accomplish it. Let us remember all thy mercies, O Supreme! and let our tongues be employed in thy just praise from morning unto evening. Let us remember thee, O great Redeemer! weep for thy sufferings, and rejoice in thy triumphant victory: shudder with thee in the grave; and rise above the clouds with thy bright form in thine ascension.

Thou Christ hast conquered sin! 'tis thou, O Saviour, who hast unbared the everlasting doors of death! thou, by thine abundant power, creating good from evil, hast turned the fatal fall of man to glory.
The

The transgression of our first parent, has by thee been made the source of hope and blessing to his latest progeny! thou, by submitting once to death, hast broken his fell dart for ever; and by the willing torments of thy cross, hast saved the race of man from everlasting misery!

2. RESOLVES.

I read with awe the passion of my Saviour! I see the dignity of his person, and the dread nature of his sufferings: pride is vanquished in me! and piety shall tread it into dust. My gratitude shall, step by step, with even pace, attend my wonder! and I will shew it is not fruitless reverence I pay on this appointed solemn time. I will abstain from sin. These days at least I will abstain: and powerful custom will begin its influence. The conquest will be easier to morrow; and every succeeding day shall strengthen this happy purpose.

What! shall the Son of God have died in vain! When there was none but him that could have saved mankind; shall he have suffered ignominy and death to wipe off the account of former sin; and shall I offend against his goodness, by adding new transgressions?

Far

Far be it from my now enlightened soul. Thou my Redeemer, thou shalt be my guard ! remembering thy mercies, I will avoid offence, and when the vanquished enemy would delude me by temptation, then will I call on thee ! when the temptation comes, I will oppose thy cross : thine agonies shall chill the thought of guilty pleasures : nor will I be so deeply criminal as to mix in my breast the thought of sin and thee !

Thou only, O my Saviour, couldst have given this proof of an unconquerable love to our abandoned race. Even then when their offences were most hateful to thee, thou pitiedst the offenders : none else was worthy to atone the guilt : none beside would have paid the ransom of our crimes. It needed love and tenderness indeed ! but thou art love itself.

Strengthened by gratitude, my duty shall be firm. To thee with all humility and thankfulness, I will look up, great Author of my better life ; of my salvation : fixing my thoughts on thee ! I will adore and imitate ; and placing a due value on that everlasting life, thou hast obtained for me beyond the grave ; I will not value this short present scene so much as to give up my innocence and peace of
mind

mind for all the transitory advantages which it can give.

Shall I deceive for gold, which robbers may take away to-morrow, and which the grave will certainly, after a short time, give from me to another? I who have everlasting treasure in the heavens!

Shall I refuse it to the poor, who know its little value, and the short possession? when I know also, that what I cast upon the waters shall return; that what I give to these I lend the Lord; that every little I bequeath in pity, I truly am converting to eternal happiness.

Shall I, who weep, tears only for the blood of my expiring Lord, even now, while I commemorate in a peculiar manner his pains and sufferings for me; shall I not lament my sins? shall I not detest; shall I not abjure and forsake them? yes, for ever. Pride and the love of wealth are surely conquered; the eager love of pleasure is subdued; and in this victory, obtained by the commemoration of my Saviour's sacrifice, I have confounded the most powerful advocates for sin. By the remembrance of the same great scene, I will for ever doom them to silence and subjection; and I shall find, I feel and know
already

already, that I shall, in their abandoned place, a better treasure and an everlasting satisfaction : the riches of hope ; the joys of purity and innocence.

I will compleat the conquest of myself by strict obedience to the holy ordinances, which pious men have, with the sanction of the laws, established for this holy season.

I will remember my past faults with tears, and prayers ; with fastings, and with mournings. The account of mine own offences shall swell the tribute which I pay unto his sufferings, who atoned for them ; and I shall then no more repeat them. Thus will I tread down the enemy, whom my Saviour's death has laid beneath my feet : thus will I shew myself, not wholly unworthy of his favour ; thus will I secure to me the blessings he has obtained me ; and thus, I doubt not, I shall render myself partaker of his glory,

P R A Y E R.

O God most mighty ! Lord most merciful ! Creator of the world and Father of mankind ; shower down upon thy lowly servant, the dew of thy heavenly grace. Establish, I most humbly beseech thee, the
pious

pious thoughts this solemn season has implanted in my mind ! Grant that retaining now and always a just and lively sense of thy great mercies, I may abstain from future sin : that I this day and every day succeeding, may avoid the causes and delusions into offence ; and against all temptation, calling into mind the image of my Saviour's sufferings, may through the merit of his blessed redemption, enter into that glory thou hast prepared for those who love thee. Amen.

T U E S D A Y.

The third day of the Holy Week.

I. MEDITATIONS.

THAT man had sinned ; and that he could not of himself atone the offence, we see and feel : how should the guilty atone for the guilty ? and who among mankind is innocent ?

Sin must be hateful to the God of purity : and we should know how hateful, that we may avoid it.

His love, his mercy, are the sources of all real happiness ; and who shall hope for them that perseveres in his offences ? If we

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would know how hateful, let the solemnity of this day's service teach us : so heinous, that no sacrifice less than divine perfection, could atone for it : so just, so great an object of the wrath of God, that no atonement less than death could be received : no death but of the innocent : no death but that with all the horror of attending circumstances, with pain and shame ; with agony, and with derision.

The story is at large before us : evangelists record, and prophets foretold it in the full circumstance, the shame and horror. Seven hundred years before the birth of Christ, Isaiah told the manner of his death ; the insolence of his accusers ; and his most perfect resignation ; the indignities, and their peculiar marks, even to shame and spiting.

Can men read this and yet be infidels ! they court their own destruction. We must believe ; unless our hearts be harder than the Egyptian tyrant's : nay, we must do much more ! for with our faith there comes twin-born, the rule of our due practice.

If sin be heinous in this high degree to God, how carefully should we avoid it ? and with what horror shun its first approaches, who know that all our hope is in his mercy ?

If

If the extreme of punishment alone, and that with the most severe aggravations, could be received as its atonement, even when perfect innocence; nay, when the divine nature itself suffered, how ought we who profess our love to God avoid and fly from it? How ought we to tremble at the penalty which will be inflicted on ourselves!—What have we wretched mean, and guilty creatures, to offer in expiation for our offences? Nothing.—Submission to the stroke of punishment is all that can be left us; and in this there will be no merit, because that stroke is unavoidable.

Be it to all of us one use, one service of this sacred season, to inculcate and impress upon our minds this most important doctrine. We know the weight of God's indignation against our crimes, by the innocence, the dignity, and the unequalled sufferings of the divine person who undertook for us their expiation.

Let this due sense of the great price of our redemption teach us, to hold it in the highest veneration; to keep it in our hearts and minds for ever; to love and to adore him the great Author of our salvation; and to hold sin in the most extreme abhorrence: because it is degrading to our natures; because it is heinous in the sight of our Crea-

tor; and was the cause of our Redeemer's sufferings.

He did not refuse the most harsh terms fixed to the price of our salvation; and shall we for ourselves start and turn back, when but the easiest are required? Is it so hard for us to do a little for ourselves, when it appeared so easy for him to suffer so much for us? O most unnatural! the least sin is an high ingratitude; and to commit them at this holy time, is to add to their own nature, and to that second incident, a most extreme indignity.

It is not fasting if we deny only food to our appetites: the true fast must be hallowed in the soul. It is to abstain from the first thoughts of sin; we are at all times rendered mean and miserable by it; but at this we add an insult to our Saviour's agonies; and join the abandoned crew who mocked the king of heaven.

To abstain from offence is the first step to virtue; but we have much more in our power. Let it be seen, though not with ostentation, that the sacred time has this effect upon us. Let us attend the service of our God, who is most immediately present when many join in adoration. Let us be liberal in our charities; the poor and miserable are always before us; and let us
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achieve the harder task forgiveness, of those who have offended us. We need much more from heaven : and let us show we do not ask it with revengeful hearts.

The son of God forgave his enemies : and shall the child of man think it too great a condescension ? Meekness and patience were his character ; and shall we distinguish ourselves by insolence and by resentment ? Let us remember vengeance is the Lord's ; and that for us the higher is the offence we might return, the greater is the glory of forgiveness.

Have we been so idle or so rash as to interpret sufferings into guilt ? Have we supposed misfortunes judgments ? and dared to call the sufferings of our fellow-creatures the vengeance of an offended God. Let us learn candour from this great example. Who ever suffered like the Saviour of the world ; even while he was fulfilling the great decree, and working our redemption ?

As we for this reason should not judge of others from their sufferings, so neither let us on that fearful thought, afflict ourselves. Whatever we may endure in this short and transitory world, let us not think it the immediate stroke of heaven. He who suffers most, may be most innocent ; and far from speaking an offended God,
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his miseries, if he bears them patiently; may, nay, they assuredly will endear him more to the divine favour; by adding to his character one virtue.

2. R E S O L V E S.

If I have enemies, for who in this bad world can live without? I will endure their malice, and forgive them. I have before my eyes the bright example of my Saviour; and herein I can imitate his meekness. If they persecute me I will pray for them: who knoweth but the Lord may turn their hearts? but whether this be or be not the event, yet my reward is sure. I cannot err O Jesu, while I pursue thy steps: nor can I fear the violence of man, while I am sure I have not offended God. If he shall justify what matter who condemneth: if he approve, the malice of weak man is ineffectual.

Yea, should oppression fall upon me from the laws; should I be injured even by those from whom I might expect protection? I will remember Jesus and be mute. The priests and rulers joined to persecute his innocence, even to death: his silence astonished the Roman: but the clamour of the Jews prevailed. Pilate declared him

him innocent; yet gave commission for his execution.

The world did never, nor can it ever shew an instance of brutality and folly like to this: yet, he whom I profess to follow bore it without repining.

If insolence and cruel mockeries should fall upon me, the hardest to be borne of all human miseries, yet will I be patient. I will remember him whom the meanest officers of power derided; and bearing like to him the insult without reproach, will shew to those who offer it, even what I feel myself, that perfect patience is a perfect triumph.

What are the ills, the insults, and oppressions, that can be heaped on me, compared with those my blessed Saviour suffered? his sacred steps are always in my sight; and he the bright example; whom to follow, is to be sure of happiness and glory.

Far be injustice from my soul; and far oppression from my feeling heart. Yet, if they should at any time attempt to gain admittance; if the deceiver of mankind, taking advantage of some sharp trial, should urge me to be insolent, oppressive, or revengeful: then also my dear Saviour, even then will I remember thee! Shall I who
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hate oppression be myself guilty of it? and shall the resolution I have made to bear it well, leave me unprovided against my own guiltiness? absurd and shameful thought!

No.—From this hour I will forgive offences. No man shall be more ready to injure me than I will be to pardon: and shewing mercy I will hope to find it.

P R A Y E R.

Hear me, I beseech thee, O most merciful God, and grant that under the saving wing of thy divine protection, I may pass through the troubles of this world, a meek and lowly sufferer, where there shall be oppression: grant that my Saviour, whose sufferings and example I now commemorate in humble and in warm devotion, may be to me an angel of light against the power of darkness; that following his pure steps I may obtain thy favour; and thro' his merits and powerful mediation, finally, rejoice in his salvation, Amen.

W E D.

W E D N E S D A Y.

Fourth day of the Holy Week.

I. MEDITATIONS.

GREAT as the mercies are which we received; dreadful as the necessity we had for the atonement; yet, can we without grief, and shame, and terror, behold the price of them; the blood of our Redeemer?

So dreadful as this thought, so high has been his goodness; so far exceeding all the mind of man could dare to imagine! Nor was the horror of the scene less necessary than the atonement which it made: no otherwise could the divine vengeance be appeased; or the anger of the Lord turned from the descendents of an ungrateful disobedient man; who in return for numberless benefits, refused one article of required observance.

Reason declares to us how extreme the heinousness of sin must be in the eye of God; who is a God of purity: and from the earliest times wherein his will has been disclosed to man; this odious nature of offence against him has been impressed upon our mind's by the atonements that have been appointed for it.

Moses his servant taught what the apostle Paul has so strongly on this great occasion

authorised, that without atonement made by blood, there could be no remission.

The blood of calves and goats might purify a people ; but for the general sin of all mankind, a dearer sacrifice was called to expiate. The Lord, the Saviour Christ alone could obtain the great remission ; and that only at the price he paid, of his own precious blood.

Well may we stand astonished at his goodness ; but without that, even in the full extent, we had been lost. His death alone could give us life : and by it he hath opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers.

How great, how noble, indeed, how divine, appeared the deliberate manner in which he accepted the harsh terms of our redemption ? and preparing for that holy purpose, took leave of his disciples. Not as one going to an ignominious death, but to the accomplishment of some great purpose : declaring he would not eat more of the passover, or drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God should come.

The example is indeed too great for us to imitate ; as much above us as the divine is above the human nature. Yet while we reverence, let us also know, that to our power it is our duty, as it is our highest honour, to follow the bright example.

Lost

Loft in wonder while we gaze upon it, let us join to our astonishment the purest and the warmest gratitude: and to that gratitude our humble imitation. What shall we refuse to do in the relief or the assistance of our fellow-creatures, when we remember what Christ did for us? How shall we dare to murmur at our sufferings, when we reflect on what he suffered.

R E S O L V E S.

The preparation for my Saviour's death has brought before me the divine appointment, and original of the most holy sacrament! Have I neglected the repeated observance of this pious act? Now awakened from the trance of my insensibility, let me repent the fault, and never be again guilty.

What is it I have dared to neglect? rather, what has induced me to deny myself the first of human comforts! the balm of wounded minds; the triumph over sin and misery, death and eternal ruin!

Do I presume to bear the name of Christian; and have I kept myself from that holy table? Do I then dare to claim the merits of his sacrifice, whose preparation, instituted by himself, and commemorated so often and so reverently by the church, of which I call myself a member, I neglect? I am confounded at the thought;

shame covers me : and I fear to question myself farther. Surely I had forgot who instituted the divine office : surely I had not thought that it was the image of his preparation for death : for that death which gave me an everlasting life.

I will hereafter pay a due attendance at thine altar ; I will by future duty atone my former faults ; and the great season is at hand. The day of thy blessed resurrection now invites me ; thy church commands me : and I will be hereafter thy more pious follower, and her obedient son.

Could disobedient Israel celebrate with a holy reverence the paschal supper, the passover commemorating their deliverance when the first-born of Ægypt were destroyed ; and shall I neglect the holy memory and due celebration of my greater redemption ? O shame ! O misery !

For them the first-born of the Ægyptians fell ; for me the prince of the infernal world. Ægyptian bondage could afflict the body only ; the power of Satan was against the soul ! their rescue was from the ills of this life ; mine from the miseries of eternity !

The Jews even when the murder of Christ was in their minds, devoutly celebrated their escape from Ægypt. I while I read the story can omit my duty : I who
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condemn that people shew myself more guilty. But penitence and amendment is the path to pardon ; the day approaches, and the proof is easy. I will attend the duty of this holy rite.

This I will reverence as the tree of life ; this as the sacred covenant of the bow, extended thro' the skies ; and my obedience shall declare I am a son of the first Adam redeemed by the second ; and too sensible of that deliverance to offend, and plunge myself in death again.

P R A Y E R.

Hear me O Lord most mighty, O God most merciful : grant me thy grace to expiate by due and reverend attention to the blessed sacrament of our Lord's supper, the neglects of my former thoughtless life. Fill me I beseech thee with that love and reverence which this week's awful commemoration of the sufferings of my Saviour has been instituted to inspire ; and grant that I may hereafter reap the intended benefits in a blessed eternity. Amen.

T H U R S.

T H U R S D A Y.

The fifth day in the Holy Week.

I. MEDITATIONS.

THE day approaches when we shall commemorate the death of our Redeemer; closing the scene of his unmerited sufferings. The great occasion shakes my soul while its attention is devoted to it.

Herod and Pilate, arrogant and insensible judges, a furious priesthood, and an incensed populace conspiring his destruction whose innocence was evident; and whose virtue claimed the respect of the whole earth. They plead, they hear, they sentence; and weak authority gives up to death even him it was inclined to save.

Virtue and vice are best seen in their opposition; and the world never gave so strong a contrast as this between the Saviour of mankind, innocent and resigned, and these his judges and accusers, blind and outrageous together. Thus heaven is pleased to make even its worst creatures instruments of good. The Jewish priests and Roman governors assisted even by their most unpardonable crimes in the great work of our redemption.

Now

Now let us set the example full before us. To-morrow we shall commemorate his death ; to-day let a just and final view of his most exemplary life serve as our admonition. We who pursue the paths of vanity and pleasure, we weak and wretched, who pretend to power, to dignity, and happiness, let us once more cast our eyes on him, who with all power and means of every triumph, submitted as if helpless to every kind of shame and punishment.

And why ! it was because to that end, he had come into the world. And is not this a lesson for us all ? Are not we sent for some end also into this scene of being ? less by infinite degrees indeed, than that for which he came to earth, but still for some end : for 'twas the Almighty and All-wise who sent us ; and he does nothing in vain.

Let us consider what it was ; and see we execute it : 'twas not to revel in idleness ; 'twas not to indulge ourselves in guilty pleasure : if this be our purpose, better we had not been born. It was to approve ourselves by a short and temporary tryal worthy of that eternal happiness and glory, which he has in his infinite goodness prepared for us. This is the goal at which we are to aim ; this the prize of
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our victorious course ; and let us so run that we may obtain it.

2. RESOLVES.

If I at length am sensible of my condition ; if the devout course of this week's meditation has called my scattered thoughts back to their proper object, the crown immortal ready in the heavens ; if weaned from a vain world, I have fixed my mind above ; now nothing shall remove it.

If it be always idle, nay, and sinful to indulge the vain pleasures of this world, this sacred week it is most highly criminal : I will devote more fervently than ever the short remain of it to heaven, and banishing the sense of earthly being, I will be, O my Saviour, only thine.

Thus I shall gain the first step of that ladder the patriarch saw let down from heaven to earth : the course of angels ; but when the feet are worthy not denied to man.

This gained, the rest is easy. I shall find the thorny path of virtue, as it has been called, a pleasant, because it is a necessary way : and the strait gate will not deny entrance to one who struggles for his passage. This is the difficulty ; for behind is heaven !

I will renounce the vanities of this idle world, mean in its highest pride, and tottering in its greatest security, I will instead of the common way of life behave according to the rules laid down for me by the holy spirit; for heaven and earth, life and death are not more opposite than these.

My great example and my everlasting theme shall be my Saviour's conduct. When men oppress me I will say, how would the Lord Jesus, have borne this? and all his meekness thus shall be transfused into my bosom.

Does the enjoined devotion of the time, its abstinence and holy exercise, reduce and weaken my reluctant body? my soul is gathering strength the while; and it is that which is to live for ever.

Pleasures weaken and debase us: the spirit of devotion is a spirit of strength supporting us in all trials, guarding us with a shield of adamant against temptations and dangers.

I am sure thus to pass in my better part invulnerable; and for the rest it is not worth my care. Secure of victory, why should I regard the light pain of my temporary wounds?

I call myself the follower of my Saviour; and can I hope to escape from per-

secution? the shafts of SLANDER, nay, those which human nature finds more terrible, of SCORN, shall all fly at me: but I am taught to bear them. My great example is before me; and I will declare myself his follower, while those for whom I shall hereafter mourn, despise me.

P R A Y E R.

Comfort me I beseech thee O Lord God, in thy salvation, and give me strength to bear the scorn which this world throws on piety: grant that I may preserve for ever holy in my memory the lowliness and meekness of my Saviour, and by his blessed example, learn to pray for those who oppress me: and finally, that after this life passed in an humble but fervent imitation of his character, I may be received into his kingdom. Amen.

GOOD FRIDAY.

The sixth day of the Holy Week. —

I. MEDITATIONS.

THE rest was preparation: now the scene itself discloses. Dreadful day! terrible even to remember. What then
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to have seen! the Saviour of the world expires in agonies; and nature shares them with him. The heavens are darkened: rocks rend asunder: graves burst their heavy walls, and send to light again their dead! emblems of an universal resurrection.

The fight converted pagans! wretched and obstinate they, who with the first light God had given the world in the prophecies which promised this event, could shut their eyes to truth, and seal their ears against conviction! their's be the forfeit: their's it is: his blood does rest upon them and on their children.

Our's is the choice; to reverence or to mock our Saviour: for he that is not with him, is against him: he who on such a day when heaven and earth and universal nature; all but the stubborn heart of man, felt the agonies of an expiring Saviour, can enter into leagues with vanity, and make his covenant with vice, is more a violator of the sacrifice of his redemption, than all the accusers and judges of his Lord, than Judas, and than Herod.

They doubted: we believe. They had this palliation. We disclaim all excuse if we profane the day.

Dost thou refuse to join the holy office; thou rebellest criminally against the institutions of the church.

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Dost thou profane it by an idle thought? thou dost insult thy great Redeemer; settest at nought his agonies, and mockest the holy passion. Read!—think!—and tremble!

RESOLVES.

I am convinced. Truth flows at once upon me. This day's devotion shall fix in my heart the everlasting principles of my religion; and I will remember on the morrow how I behaved to-day: how he should behave who solemnized the last day worthily.

I will remember farther, that the Christian must not be one day pious, one day idle. I will consider what advantage I have gained; and will preserve it by continued holiness.

PRAYER.

O most merciful God implant and preserve in my mind the truths and the conviction I have thus felt: and grant that by thy heavenly grace assisting, the due sense of my duty to thee, and reverence for my Redeemer, which from this course of prayer and meditation have made their passage to my heart, may remain there for ever. Grant this I beseech for the sake of my Redeemer, whose sufferings I now commemorate. Amen.

FINIS.



